

The decision to
immunize your
child is important.
Get the facts!



Why should I immunize? ○ ○ ○

To prevent common illnesses.

Some diseases in the United States are common and also very serious, such as whooping cough, flu, and rotavirus. If you do not vaccinate your child, he or she will be at risk for serious, and sometimes deadly, diseases.

To prevent diseases that exist in the United States.

Diseases such as whooping cough, flu, measles, and mumps, still occur in our country. When fewer people get immunized against these diseases, outbreaks may happen.

To prevent diseases that exist in other parts of the world.

Diseases such as polio and diphtheria are rare in the United States. But anyone who travels may catch and spread these diseases. They're only a plane ride away.

To protect your family and community.

By immunizing your child, you also protect those who have weakened immune systems; can't get shots because they're too young, too old, or have certain medical conditions.

Learn more about vaccine benefits and risks

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH:

- **FREE BOOKLET:** *Plain Talk About Childhood Immunization* (available in English, Spanish, and Russian)
- **DOWNLOAD:** <http://bit.ly/PlaintalkEng>
- **ORDER:** immunematerials@doh.wa.gov

U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION:

- **VISIT:** www.cdc.gov/vaccines
- **CALL:** 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) or 1-800-232-6348 (TTY)
- **EMAIL:** NIPINFO@cdc.gov

VACCINE EDUCATION CENTER AT THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA:

- **VISIT:** www.chop.edu/centers-programs/vaccine-education-center

IMMUNIZATION ACTION COALITION:

- **VISIT:** www.vaccineinformation.org

WithinReach

Call the WithinReach Help Me Grow Washington
Hotline at **1-800-322-2588** (711 TTY relay)
or www.ParentHelp123.org



Child Profile is a program of the Washington
State Department of Health.

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If you have a disability and need this document in another format,
please call 1-800-322-2588 (711 TTY relay).

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Immunizations

○ BIRTH THROUGH 6 YEARS





Immunize on time ▲ ▲ ▲

It's best to immunize your child at the earliest recommended age.

Babies and toddlers are more likely than older children to become very ill or disabled, be hospitalized, or even die from diseases that vaccines can prevent. Work with your doctor or nurse to immunize on time.

Stay up-to-date on your child's required immunizations.

Keeping up-to-date also means your child will meet the immunization requirements to start child care, preschool, or kindergarten. Without vaccine protection, your child will be at risk for diseases and may need to stay home during a disease outbreak at school or child care. Some parents exempt their child from getting one or more vaccines. To do this, state law requires parents to get vaccine benefit and risk information from a doctor as well as his or her signature on the exemption form.

Our state law does not allow personal or philosophical exemption from the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

What if my child falls behind?

If your child falls behind schedule by missing a vaccine dose, catch up as soon as possible. The series does NOT have to be started over. Your child won't have the best protection against the disease until he or she gets all recommended doses.

What if my child is sick?

Immunizations can be given even if your child is taking antibiotics or has a mild fever, cold, or diarrhea. The vaccines will still be effective and won't make your child's illness worse. At every visit, ask your doctor or nurse if your child is due for immunizations.

How do vaccines work? ○ ○ ○

Vaccines create immunity (protection) against serious diseases.

When we get sick, our bodies make antibodies to fight infection. The antibodies stay in our bodies ready to protect us in case we get infected by the same germ later on. Vaccines work the same way. They create protective antibodies without making us sick from the disease. Vaccines are the safest way to teach your child's body how to defend itself against serious diseases.

Why are vaccines given at such a young age?

Babies are at high risk for many serious diseases, but vaccines help them build immunity so they're protected as soon as possible in life. A baby's immune system can easily handle many vaccines at one visit without being overloaded. Vaccines are given to children at the age when their immune system responds best. Babies should get vaccinated as soon as possible to protect them during the early and most vulnerable months of their lives.

Why so many vaccines at one visit?

We have vaccines to safely protect children against more diseases than ever before. Giving multiple shots at the same visit means fewer office visits. It also saves time and money and can be less traumatic for your child.

Why does my child need so many doses of the same vaccine?

Your child needs more than one dose of most vaccines to build the best immunity. Protection increases after each dose your child gets. Children also need "booster doses" of some vaccines throughout their lifetime to stay protected against certain diseases.

Comfort your child * * *

It may be hard to watch your child get shots. If your child sees you relaxed, he or she is more likely to feel safe. Breathe slowly and stay calm.

Things you can do to comfort your child at any age:

- Bring along a favorite toy or blanket
- Hold your child in your lap
- Reassure your child that everything is OK
- Ask your doctor about when to give medicine to reduce pain or fever

Things you can do to comfort your baby:

- Touch your baby gently and talk softly
- Make eye contact and smile
- Hold, cuddle, or feed your baby

Things you can do to comfort your toddler:

- Talk to or sing with your child
- Help your child take deep breaths and "blow out" the pain
- Point out posters or objects in the room
- Tell a story or have your child tell you one
- Let your child cry and don't force him or her to be brave
- Help your child understand they may feel a little pinch but it will go away very fast



Diseases that spread by coughing and sneezing:

○ **CHICKENPOX (VARICELLA)** causes an itchy skin rash (with blisters) and fever. Chickenpox can be severe and may lead to meningitis (swelling of the covering of the brain and spinal cord), serious skin infections, and pneumonia. Chickenpox may also spread by direct contact with the blisters.

○ **DIPHTHERIA** causes a sore throat and mild fever and can completely block a person's airway. Diphtheria can cause breathing and heart problems, coma, paralysis, and death.

○ **FLU (INFLUENZA)** often causes high fever, cough, headache, and muscle aches. Flu viruses can cause pneumonia and heart problems. Parents and caregivers should get vaccinated to prevent spreading flu to babies. Flu can be very serious, especially for babies under six months old who are too young to get the flu vaccine. They often must be hospitalized.

○ **HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE type b (Hib)** can cause meningitis (swelling of the covering of the brain and spinal cord); infections of the joints, skin, and blood; brain damage; and death. Hib is most dangerous to children under five.

○ **MEASLES** causes a high fever, cold-like symptoms, and a rash. It can cause pneumonia, hearing loss, brain damage, and death. A child who has not been immunized will most likely get measles if exposed. Measles spreads very quickly among unimmunized people.

○ **MUMPS** can cause headache; fever; and swelling of the cheeks, neck, or jaw. Mumps can cause hearing loss, meningitis (swelling of the covering of the brain and spinal cord), and brain damage. It can also prevent people from having children (sterility).

○ **PNEUMOCOCCAL** disease is the main cause of bacterial meningitis (swelling of the covering of the brain and spinal cord) in young children. It can also cause serious blood infections and pneumonia.

○ **RUBELLA** causes a fever and a rash on the face and neck. Pregnant women who get rubella may miscarry or have babies with birth defects, such as blindness, deafness, or developmental delays.

○ **WHOOPING COUGH (PERTUSSIS)** causes spells of coughing that make it hard for a child to eat, drink, or breathe. Whooping cough can cause pneumonia, seizures, brain damage, and death. Babies younger than six months are at highest risk of being hospitalized and dying from whooping cough. Most babies get the disease from a family member. Older children and adults who have contact with babies should make sure they're up-to-date on their Tdap vaccine.

Diseases that spread by putting something into the mouth that has the virus on or in it:

These diseases are found in the stool (feces) of infected people. They spread when a person puts something that has a virus on or in it (food, water, hands, or an object) into his or her mouth:

△ **HEPATITIS A** can cause fever, nausea, and vomiting. These symptoms can last for several months. It also causes liver disease.

△ **POLIO** can cause permanent paralysis and death. There is no cure for polio. Polio still exists in other countries and is only a plane ride away.

△ **ROTAVIRUS** causes high fever, vomiting, and severe diarrhea. These symptoms can cause a child to lose body fluids and become dehydrated, which may lead to hospitalization.

Diseases that spread differently:

* **HEPATITIS B** spreads by contact with infected blood or other body fluids. It can cause serious liver infections. A mother with hepatitis B can pass the virus to her newborn baby during childbirth. Nine out of ten babies who get infected will develop lifelong (chronic) hepatitis B. Of those, one in four will die of liver problems, including liver cancer, later in life.

* **MENINGOCOCCAL** disease spreads by close contact with infected people by kissing, coughing, or sharing anything by mouth, such as cups, toys, or toothbrushes. It can cause meningitis (swelling of the covering of the brain and spinal cord), pneumonia, and blood infection. Severe disease can cause brain damage, deafness, limb loss, and death.

* **TETANUS (LOCKJAW)** spreads by germs that enter the body through a cut or puncture wound. It can cause muscle spasms, breathing problems, and often, death. Protection from tetanus will always be needed because the tetanus germ lives in soil and manure and can't be removed from the environment.

Immunization:
The most important way to protect your child from these 15 serious, and sometimes deadly, diseases.



You need immunizations throughout your lifetime.
Be sure your whole family is up-to-date.

Recommended Immunization Schedule Ages Birth through 6 Years

Based on the 2020 immunization schedule from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

VACCINES	AGE	Birth	1 month	2 months	4 months	6 months	9 months	12 months	15 months	18 months	19-23 months	2-3 years	4-6 years
Hepatitis B (HepB)		HepB	HepB			HepB							
Rotavirus (RV)			RV	RV	RV								
Diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis (DTaP)			DTaP	DTaP	DTaP			DTaP					DTaP
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)			Hib	Hib	Hib			Hib					
Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV)			PCV	PCV	PCV			PCV					
Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV)			IPV	IPV		IPV							IPV
Flu (influenza)						Flu (Yearly)							
Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)						MMR		MMR					MMR
Varicella (chickenpox)								Varicella					Varicella
Hepatitis A (HepA)						HepA		HepA (2 doses)					
Meningococcal						Meningococcal							
Pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV)												PPSV	

Find more information about recommended immunization schedules for older children and adults at www.cdc.gov/vaccines.



These vaccines are recommended at this age or age range.



Your child may need these vaccines if he or she has high-risk conditions. Ask your doctor or nurse for more information.



Your child may get this dose depending on the type of vaccine used. Ask your doctor or nurse for more information.

If your child misses a recommended dose, get it as soon as possible.

